



פרשת ויקהל פקודי  
פרשת החודש  
שבת מברכים  
אדר תשפ"ג  
שנת הקהל



**HAKHEL IN THE PARSHA**

The very name of this week's Parsha reflects the theme of Hakhel. Vayakhel means "and he gathered". Both Vayakhel and Hakhel derive from the same root and meaning - קהל. Kahal means a community.

Whilst made up of individuals, a Kahal becomes a new entity which transcends the sum-total of its constituent members. A member of a Kahal transcends their individuality to become a part of something greater than themselves

Moshe gathered all of Bnei Yisroel - כל עדת בני - and gave over the words of Hashem concerning the observance of Shabbos and the building of the Mishkan.

There is a dispute between the Rishonim on what the nature of the Mitzvah of the Hakhel gathering is.

According to one opinion, it is a Mitzvah for the king himself, that he should gather the Jewish people together.

Moshe had the status of a king and his gathering of the entire Jewish people to hear the word of Hashem, is like the Mitzvah of the king to gather the Jewish people for Hakhel, where they too would hear the word of Hashem.



**In this Edition**

From Nachash to Moshiach **P.1**

Hamshacha Channels in the Mikvah 2 **P.2**

**From Nachash to Moshiach**

When describing how the Keilim of the Mishkan were made, the Torah notes that the Kiyor was made from the polished copper mirrors donated by the Jewish women.

The Midrash relates that when the women presented these mirrors to Moshe, he did not want to accept them. Since they were items that were made for arousing the Yetzer Hora, they had no place in building a holy sanctuary for the Divine Presence.

Hashem told Moshe to take the mirrors "for they are more precious to Me than anything else".

These mirrors were not used by the Jewish women for immodesty, vanity or immorality. On the contrary, the Noam Elimelech writes that they were used by the Jewish women to ensure that their manner of dress and appearance was modest and would not arouse attention from any other men.

The Midrash describes how righteous women of that generation used their mirrors to beautify themselves for their husbands. They would revive their broken husbands' spirits and arouse their affection, thereby continuing to give birth to the future Jewish nation, even in the darkness and suffering of Golus.

Chassidus teaches that the Mitzvah of making a Mishkan was not limited to a physical structure. Hashem's desire is to rest within each one of us, that through our Avodah we become a resting place and sanctuary for the Shechina.

In the construction of the physical Mishkan, different materials were used. Some were naturally conducive for this holy purpose and Moshe was ready to accept them. In our Avodah, these are the innately holy activities of Torah study and prayer. These are the pursuits of our G-dly soul.

But Hashem does not only desire to dwell within us when we are engaged in Torah study and prayer. Hashem wants our Mishkan to be all-encompassing, incorporating every facet of our lives, including our engagements in physicality; our eating and drinking, business, relationships and our regular day-to-day.

This was Hashem's message to Moshe. Hashem was telling Moshe that the spiritual Mishkan cannot be limited to the innately holy parts of our lives. We need to elevate the drives and passions of our animalistic soul and our involvements in the mundane physical world, things that are not so readily G-dly. They too must be brought into our inner Mishkan and dedicated to Hashem.

Transforming our animalistic drives and desires to become holy is not easy and it comes with real inner struggle and effort. But it is the struggle that makes it so meaningful and precious. Like the mirrors, not only are our worldly and animalistic drives an essential part of building our Mishkan, they are more precious to Hashem than anything else.

The Tzemach Tzedek observes that the root of the word נחושת - copper, is נחש - a snake. The snake represents the Yetzer Hora and the unrefined physicality of the world. But the word נחש also shares the same Gematria as משיח - Moshiach.

Chassidus discusses the symbolism of a mirror. Unlike a window or transparent glass that allows the light to shine through uninterrupted, the mirror has a backing that obstructs the flow of light. But this backing or coating creates a deeper affect. Instead of the light shining through the glass, it reflects off of the coating to create a reflection, allowing us to see behind and beyond ourselves. This deeper vision would not be possible if there was no obstruction.

But this reflective quality can only be achieved if the coating of the mirror is of a refined material. If the coating is dense, the light will be absorbed instead of being reflected. Likewise, to make a reflective mirror out of copper, the dull copper must be honed and polished.

By default, the physicality of our body and the world around us obstructs and conceals the light of Hashem. But through our Avodah of 'polishing' the copper, transforming the נחש to משיח, we make our world into a mirror that will reflect the Divine light and sparkle with the greatest G-dly radiance.

# Hamshacha Channels in the Mikvah - Part 2

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

*The tilers renovating the Yeshiva Mikvah asked me about the concrete channel where the water comes in. They wanted to understand why they weren't able to tile it to match the rest of the Mikvah, which would compromise the overall aesthetic look.*

There are a number of things which disqualify water from being Kosher for a Mikva. Depending on the type of disqualification, having the water pass through a Hamshacha before entering the Mikva, can reinstate its kosher status and the Mikva will be valid. The three relevant disqualifications are;

**Sheuvin;** Once rain (or other natural) water has been drawn or passed through a receptacle (Keli), whether the Keli is *Mekabel Tumah* or not, the water is invalidated. If even 3 Log (approx. 1 litre) of drawn water falls into the Mikva before there is a full measure of 40 Seah of rainwater, the Mikva is invalidated.

**Tefisas Yad Adam;** The water coming into the Mikva cannot come via the "hand of man", even if no Keli is involved. Even if the water was splashed into the Mikva by a person's feet or hands, the Mikva is invalid.

**Haviyaso Al Yedei Tahara;** Water coming into the Mikva cannot flow over an object which is *Mekabel Tumah*, even if the object is not a receptacle.

In the previous edition, we discussed the issue of Sheuvin and how in certain circumstances, having Hamshacha can render this water Kosher for a Mikva. We also discussed the length required for Hamshacha and what type of surface is required. In this edition, we will address the other two Halachic issues.

## Haviyaso Al Yedei Tahara

The requirement that the water coming into the Mikva cannot be brought over anything that is *Mekabel Tumah*, is derived from the Pasuk *יהי טהור מים*<sup>1</sup>, "the gathering of water should be pure". This disqualification is different to the *Pesul* of Sheuvin and therefore applies even when the object is not a Keli (receptacle).

Whilst some authorities maintain that this disqualification only applies when all of the water comes into the Mikva in this manner, there are those who are stringent and will disqualify the Mikva even if only 3 Log of water came through or over something that is *Mekabel Tumah*.

This *Pesul* only applies if the water would not otherwise be able to reach the Mikva were the object which is *Mekabel Tumah* not there.

Some Acharonim<sup>2</sup> question this leniency and maintain that any water passing over something that is *Mekabel Tumah* will be invalidated, even if the water would otherwise flow into the Mikva by itself.

Due to this concern, care must be taken when choosing the pipes that are used to bring the rainwater to the Mikva. The Shulchan Aruch records that metal pipes may not be used<sup>3</sup>. If the pipes are attached to the ground and made to be used in this manner, they will not be *Mekabel Tumah*. Wood or ceramic pipes are not *Mekabel Tumah*<sup>4</sup> even if not attached.

If the water did become invalidated by flowing via something which is *Mekabel Tumah*, the Shulchan Aruch rules that it will only be *Pasul* if the water fell directly into the Mikva from the object which is *Mekabel Tumah*. If the water falls outside of the Mikva and flows (i.e Hamshacha) into the Mikva the water is kosher. Alternatively, if a small wooden pipe is added at the end of the metal pipe, this will also suffice.

Unlike for Sheuvin, in this case Hamshacha of 3 Tefachim is not required. Neither does the Hamshacha have to be over ground which is able to absorb.

## Tefisas Yad Adam

As mentioned above, if rainwater enters the Mikva via the "hand of man", it is rendered invalid. Here too Hamshacha can be used to render the water kosher once more. Whilst the Chasam Sofer<sup>5</sup> writes that a minimal Hamshacha suffices for the issue of Tefisas Yad Adam, most Poskim require a Hamshacha of at least 3 Tefachim and that it should be over ground which is able to absorb.

## Practical application

Our Mikvaos are filled with multiple times the required 40 Seah rainwater and care is taken that there is no Tefisas Yad Adam in bringing the rainwater into the Mikva. We also make sure that the water does not pass over or through anything which is *Mekabel Tumah*. Therefore, technically there is no requirement for Hamshacha for the rainwater.

Nonetheless, the stringency of bringing the rainwater into the Mikva via Hamshacha is still followed. Doing this can be a safeguard for any

unknown problems that may arise that we are unaware of while filling the Mikva.

For example, whilst the roof is checked before filling a Mikva, it is possible that Keilim which are either receptacles or are *Mekabel Tumah*, such as balls, plastic cups etc. may end up on the roof during the time that the Mikva is filling. Having Hamshacha takes care of any resulting issues that this may cause.

The above applies to the rainwater which is brought to the rainwater Bor.

Having the tap water which is used to fill the immersing Bor enter via Hamshacha, is an extra Hiddur, which is not technically required. This is because the water, which is Sheuvin, becomes Kosher for immersion by connecting it to the water in the rainwater Bor through Hashakah - the touching (kissing) of the waters).

Nonetheless, as seen in the discussion of Reviah Vehamshacha in the previous edition, where the drawn water is passed through a Hamshacha and there is a majority of the required rainwater, the drawn water is "upgraded" in status and becomes like rainwater itself.

In Mikvas that use filters, the return water coming back into the Mikva should also be brought in via Hamshacha. The filter equipment will be *Mekabel Tumah* and will have Keilim inside. Having the water return via Hamshacha will likewise "upgrade" the status of the water.



1. See Zevachim 25b. There is a dispute whether the disqualification in Mideoraisa or whether it is Derabanan and the Posuk is only an Asmachta.
2. Chazon Ish YD 135:2
3. Even though they do not have a receptacle, Peshutie Klei Matchos are *Mekabel Tumah*
4. We are machmir with plastic pipes, treating them as *Mekabel Tumah*
5. YD 200